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Intercultural Competence: The Intersection of Intercultural Sensitivity and Self-Authorship

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Intercultural Competence:

The Intersection of Intercultural Sensitivity and Self-Authorship

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Chancellor Honors Program: Senior Thesis

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to review the literature on intercultural competence and understand what learning outcomes, developmental milestones, and learning experiences contribute to development of intercultural competence. Through this review it is suggested that the development of intercultural competence is achieved through the development of self-authorship with intercultural sensitivity being a precursor to intercultural competence. This study found that fostering the growth of intercultural competence requires educators to cultivate the three skills of (1) understanding difference, (2) learning from difference, and (3) communicating/working with difference in their students.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Since its inception the United States has been a monoculture society founded in and dominated by the White, Anglo-Saxon Christian traditions absorbing immigrant cultures, however by 2050 there will be no clear racial majority population (Cuyjet, Hamilton and Cooper 2012, p. 87). In October 2014 the Center for American Progress found that there 40.7 million foreign born immigrants in the United States. This is approximately 13% of our 318.9 million-person population (Center for American Progress Immigration Team, 2014). This means that more than one in every ten people that Americans interact with will be a recent addition to the United States. These new residents brought along many various and unique cultures. Because there was such a diverse influx of people and heritages over the history of the United States, our country has become multicultural salad bowl of heritages (D'Innocenzo & Sirefman 1992). This retention of peoples' original culture within the larger predominantly White American culture requires US citizens to regularly engage in intercultural interactions, though recent events—executions of Muslim college students, campus dialogue surrounding Black Lives Matter campaigns, and urban riots in response to police action—suggest that the country's citizens may not fully possess what is needed to successfully navigate and communicate in this country's multicultural environment. By developing intercultural competency, we can create a society where the aforementioned events don't take place; however, the fact that these events are happening demonstrates a lack of intercultural competence.

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Problem Statement

The United States is primarily a country of immigrants each bringing their own cultural heritage to the country. Using only a racial lens to distinguish difference in the United States, 80% of the country is Caucasian, 1.6% is Asian, 12% is African American, and 6.4% is Hispanic (Chen and Starosta 1996). These broad categories are further subdivided by other factors such as ethnicity, religion, sexuality and etc. The end result is a population with great diversity in its composition. Despite this diverse environment, current and past events in the U. S. show a lack of “appropriate and effective understanding and appreciation of cultural differences” (Chen 1998, p. 5).

A national climate known for its cultural diversity requires intercultural competence in its leaders and its workforce so that each may effectively communicate and collaborate with peers; successfully navigating the environments shaped by those differences (Dong 1995). A 2007 Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) study exploring essential learning outcomes for the 21st century college education found that 76% of employers desired intercultural competence in their employees (AACU 2007). Yet, student affairs professionals note that students are matriculating into universities with ethnocentric mindsets (Dong 1995), sometimes not even able to acknowledge that differences between various demographics exist (Henry, Cobb-Roberts, Dorn, Exum, Keller, and Shirecliffe 2007). As employers actively look for intercultural competence in potential employees, colleges must also facilitate students’ intercultural development (AACU 2007).

There is a substantial amount of literature investigating the intersecting topics of diversity, difference, multiculturalism, and intercultural competence; not only in the

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fields of Higher Education and Student Affairs; but also within related fields such as cultural Anthropology, Psychology, and Sociology. However, even with this surplus of research on the topic, a clear way to successfully and consistently nurture intercultural development in college students is only beginning to emerge. Clear learning outcomes associated with intercultural competence would provide direction for those shaping intercultural educational interventions.

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to review the literature on intercultural competence to understand what is known about what learning outcomes facilitate its development in traditional college students. Relying on King and Baxter-Magolda's Model of Intercultural Maturity, this study examines and identifies the learning experiences and outcomes that contribute to the development of self-authored intercultural competence.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study include:

- (a) What collegiate learning experiences are shown in the literature to facilitate the development of intercultural sensitivity?
- (b) What collegiate learning experiences theoretically facilitate the development self-authorship?
- (c) Which developmental milestones of self-authorship foster intercultural sensitivity?

Theoretical Framework

In 2005 Baxter Magolda and Patricia King purposed a framework of "existing theory and research on student development and intercultural competence" that

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synthesized various theories in order to better understand the development of this trait (Magolda and King 2005, p. 1). In this framework intercultural learning was said to occur in cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal dimensions. These divisions then provide a framework for identifying and categorizing learning outcomes. In this framework, Magolda and King linked the development of intercultural competence to Magolda's theory of self-authorship, believing that developing these two traits are pivotal for one to becoming interculturally mature.

Significance

This study investigated what promotes intercultural competence, focusing specifically on what developmental milestones facilitate the growth of intercultural sensitivity and self-authorship. Developing intercultural sensitivity and self-authorship in students better equips them for the post-collegiate workforce and citizenship in an increasingly multicultural country. Exploring the relationship between intercultural sensitivity and self-authorship as well as what learning experiences trigger growth in these areas enables educators to construct learning interventions that foster the development of intercultural competence. By encouraging our students to develop these traits, college graduates can work more effectively across difference, which will expand equity and inclusion and likely reduce prejudice.

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Definitions

The following definitions are provided to clarify for the reader the meaning the author attributes to each:

Culture.

Anthropologists explain culture as “traditions and customs, transmitted through learning that play a large role in determining the beliefs and behavior of people exposed to them... Cultural traditions include customs and opinions, developed over the generations, about proper and improper behavior” (Kottak, 2007, p. 2). For this paper the word heritage will be used interchangeably with the word culture as both imply an inherited salient identity for either an individual or group. Diversity and culture in terms of this paper will encompass all possible identifiers of a person including but not limited to race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and ableness.

Intercultural competence.

King and Magolda equate intercultural competence to being interculturally mature in their article (King and Magolda 2005), but it is more formally defined as the “ability to behave effectively and appropriately in intercultural interactions” (Chen 1998, p. 9). In other words, intercultural competence is the behavioral aspect of existing in a multicultural environment. When one has intercultural competence, they are able to navigate this environment successfully, but when one lacks intercultural competence, they are not able to do so.

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Intercultural sensitivity.

King and Baxter Magolda identify Bennett's conception of intercultural sensitivity as a primary building block of intercultural competence. Bennett defined intercultural sensitivity as "...awareness of subjective cultural context (world view), including one's own, and developing greater ability to interact sensitively and competently across cultural contexts." (Bennett 2009, p. 2).

Self-authorship.

Self-authorship consists of three elements: trusting the internal voice, building an internal foundation, and securing internal commitments (Magolda 2008). In the context of intercultural maturity, fully realized self-authorship is seen as the ability for one to "construct an internally defined perspective on how one's race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation is integrated into one's view of oneself" (Magolda and King 2005, p. 582). In this sense, self-authorship is when someone understands who they are as a person and how their identity interacts with the world around them.

Summary

Because the United States is a multicultural environment, its citizens must be intercultural competent to exist in this environment; however, recent events such as the murder of Muslim college students, the need for Black Lives Matter campaigns, and riots in response to racially specific police brutality demonstrate that US citizens lack intercultural competence. There is a great deal of literature on topics such as diversity, inclusion, and interculturalism, yet literature on what learning experiences develop interculturalism is just now beginning to develop. The purpose of this paper is to examine

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and identify the learning experiences and outcomes that contribute to the development of self-authored intercultural competence. By better understanding what learning outcomes develop intercultural sensitivity, student affairs professionals may better equip their students to become members of a multicultural society.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

This chapter will review the literature of this topic in five areas. These five areas are culture, intercultural competence, intercultural sensitivity, self-authorship and the relationship between intercultural competence and self-authorship.

Culture

Culture is as a set of traditions, customs, and opinions developed over generations about proper and improper behavior (Kottak 2007). In this definition, culture is capable of stretching beyond the borders of countries and regions around the world to encompass heritages that people take with them wherever they travel. Culture represents the history of both individuals and groups no matter where they might be, and is particularly important in the United States, as many immigrants have held onto their original cultures after immigration. Because there are different cultures present in the United States, there are various answers to the questions that culture seeks to provide, such as: “How should we do things?, How do we interpret the world? How do we tell right from wrong?,” present in the United States (Kottack 2007, p. 2). Because immigrants to the United States retain their culture, they retain their answers for these questions, thus they retain a specific way of living their lives. This means that in the United States not only are there different ways for one to live their life, but also multiple cultures coexisting within the country at any given time. This intermingling of various cultures results in what sociologists refer to as a “multicultural salad bowl” (D’Innocenzo & Sirefman 1992).

The concept of a multicultural salad bowl contradicts the classic notion that the United States is a melting pot of culture (D’Innocenzo & Sirefman 1992). The original

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idea of a melting pot suggests that various cultures enter the melting pot of the United States and become one homogenized culture of the same consistency throughout – in the end the various cultures that make up the metaphorical ingredients eventually become indistinguishable as they become one culture. On the other hand, the concept of a salad bowl explains that while various cultures are in the same “bowl” each “ingredient” maintains its own individual identity and can be observed independently of other ingredients (D’Innocenzo & Sirefman 1992). Much like how one can distinguish a tomato in their salad amongst lettuce leaves, an observer can make out a single culture existing alongside other different cultures despite its existence among other cultures for an extended period of time.

However, the multicultural salad bowl of the United States allowing for one to live out their culture does not equate to being able to live a life free of intolerance and prejudice. Even in multicultural societies, anthropologists have identified ethnocentrism (Kottak 2007), which results in instances of intolerance and prejudice against marginalized groups. Because of this, it is important to note that just because a society is multicultural, there is no guarantee that the individuals in that society will appreciate and respect the presence of multiple cultures. Kottak defined this ethnocentrism as “the tendency to view one’s own culture as superior and to apply one’s own cultural values in judging the behavior and beliefs of people raised in different cultures” (Kottak 2007, p. 50). Thus, multicultural environments allow easy access to various different cultures for the ethnocentric to judge, appraise, and discriminate against. However, anthropologists have also identified the opposite of ethnocentrism as cultural relativism or “the viewpoint that behavior in one culture should not be judged by the standards of another culture and

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noted its presence in multicultural environments alongside ethnocentrism (Kottak, 2007, p. 50).

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Intercultural competence has been defined as “the ability of an interactant to choose among available communicative behaviors in order that he [sic] may successfully accomplish his own interpersonal goals during an encounter while maintaining the face and line of his fellow interactants within the constraints of the situation” (Wiemann 1977, p. 198). It is important to distinguish that intercultural competency is not itself intercultural communication, but rather the skill needed to communicate interculturally. It is not a characteristic one is born with, but instead one’s skill of effectiveness and appropriateness in communication that one develops throughout their life. Effectiveness refers to a communicator’s ability to accomplish a specific task, while appropriateness is a communicator’s ability to communicate in a positively viewed way (Liu 2012). And as our world’s ways of communication become more instantaneous, widespread, and accessible the more the amount of contact between people with various backgrounds coming into contact will increase. This means that for people of various backgrounds to communicate with effectiveness and appropriateness, that they must develop intercultural competence. However, to be truly interculturally competent one must develop more than just their ability to accomplish task while maintaining relationships.

In Magolda and King’s 2005 paper, they synthesize a myriad of theories and frameworks together to create a Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity. In that paper they identify the presence of intercultural competence in an individual as

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interculturally mature, effectively equating these two terms (Magolda and King 2005). Maturity is also a fitting descriptor for this idea as it implies that is a developable skill, like competence, but it also is fitting because the connotation of growing into the maturity or trait overtime through personal growth. In Magolda and King's model intercultural competence is linked together with other theories such as self-authorship and the Perry Schema demonstrating that one must develop intercultural competence alongside other aspects of oneself (Magolda and King 2005).

As stated earlier, intercultural competence has been found to be a prerequisite for effective and appropriate intercultural communication (Peng 2006). This means that a lack in ability for intercultural communication effectively equates to a lack of intercultural competence because communication is an indicator of whether one possesses intercultural competence. Studies such as the quantitative study of the intercultural communication behaviors of college students by Dong, Day, and Callaco detail this relationship. Using the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale developed by Chen and Starosta (2000) and the Multiculturalism Scale developed by Berry and Kalin (1995), Dong et al. was able to demonstrate that college students were more often than not ethnocentric and lacking in intercultural competence (Dong, Day, and Callaco 2008). This relationship between the ability communicate intercultural, the skill of intercultural competence, and the finding that college students lack intercultural competence signals a need for an understanding of what learning experiences foster the growth of this competency in order to better develop this trait in college students.

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Intercultural Sensitivity

Intercultural sensitivity is a critical trait for professionals in the field of higher education and student affairs to develop in their students because it is the precursor to intercultural competence and thus also a prerequisite for intercultural communication (Dong et al. 2014). While intercultural sensitivity is often used interchangeably with intercultural awareness and intercultural communication competency Chen and Starosta (1998) conceptualize it as the affective (motivational) component of intercultural communication. This affective aspect of intercultural communication is represented by the concept of intercultural sensitivity that refers to the subjects' "active desire to motivate themselves to understand, appreciate, and accept differences among cultures" (Chen and Starosta 1998, p. 9). It is this facet of motivated desire to exist in a world with various cultures that allows us to identify intercultural sensitivity as a precursor to intercultural competence. Therefore, sensitivity is one's awareness of oneself and want to engage with difference, while competence is one's ability to effectively and appropriately engage with difference, such as in the adaptation to difference stage of the Bennett Scale (Bennett 1993). Additionally, Chen and Starosta created the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) as a way to quantifiably measure one's level of intercultural sensitivity (1998).

Chen (1997) defined intercultural sensitivity as "an individual's ability to develop a positive motion towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences that promotes an appropriate and effective understanding and appreciation of cultural differences that promotes an appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural communication." In laymen's terms it is one's level of awareness and acknowledgement

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of differences as well as the ability and desire to use that knowledge in a positive way. Reinforcing this idea, King and Magolda identify Intercultural Sensitivity as a cornerstone to intercultural maturity and being interculturally competent (King and Baxter Magolda, 2005).

King and Magolda documented the connection between the Bennett Scale and intercultural sensitivity in 2005 when they introduced a Developmental Model for Intercultural Competency/Maturity (King and Magolda, 2005). In this model they synthesized several theories that related to the development of intercultural sensitivity. One of these theories was the Perry Schema, which details a student's development from a dualistic to relativistic thinker (Perry, 1970). So in two ways King and Magolda linked the ability to understand difference with how relatively one is able to view their world. These links came from of Bennett's ethnorelative stages and movement through the Perry Schema, which enables one to view different ways of living as another option and not innately wrong.

In terms of increasing one's intercultural sensitivity or ability to understand cultural difference, one must be able to become an ethnorelative thinker, who views other ways of life as viable options, as opposed to an ethnocentric thinker, who views their own way of life as the superior or "right" way. The Bennett Scale, also known as the Developmental Model for Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), provides a framework to observe shifts between ethnocentric and ethnorelative thinking. It accomplishes this by showing the progression of a person through six stages. Movement through these six states is seen as one's ability to transform his or herself affectively, cognitively, and behaviorally (Bennett, 2004). In the Bennett Scale's framework there are two modes or

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domains of existence. One is ethnocentrism or state of being where one's own culture is unquestioned and/or viewed as innately right (Bennett and Castiglioni, 2004). The second is ethnorelativism, a term coined by Milton Bennett. Ethnorelativism is when a person believes that "one's own beliefs and behaviors as just one organization of reality among many viable possibilities" (Bennett, 1993). These two states of being depict how people interact with various other cultures or differences in the world around them. In the Bennett Scale, people see cultures that are not their own as "other" and inherently wrong if ethnocentric, or they see it as alternate, yet viable, way of life if ethnorelative.

Ethnocentric stages of thought include denial of cultural difference, defense of cultural difference, and minimization of cultural difference, while ethnorelative stages of thought include acceptance of cultural difference, adaptation to cultural difference, and integration of cultural difference. In order of moving from most ethnocentric to most ethnorelative the stages are denial of difference, defense of difference, minimization of difference, acceptance of difference, adaptation of difference and integration of difference (Bennett, 1993). Because ethnocentric stages view other cultures as lower less correct options, they cannot understand and/or are not attempting to understand other cultures, which demonstrate a deficiency in intercultural sensitivity. In addition to this the Bennett Scale takes into account the use of this knowledge change in behavior as communication not just as perception and attitude.

This means learning experiences geared toward developing the ability to understand differences should be geared toward developing relative thinkers. The development of relative thinkers who think independently from what they have simply been told has been linked to classroom learning experiences such as debates (Jagger

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2013). Ironically, group-learning experiences in the classroom such as classroom debate have been linked to producing individualistic and relative thinkers. This is because students are forced to support their own arguments, and when another argument is better supported, a student has the chance to note that while their answer was not particularly wrong, it might not be the best one (Baker, 1955). This acknowledgement that there might be a better option has been shown to grow student understanding of course material (Nicol and Boyle, 2003). This learning experience enables students to not just acknowledge alternate viewpoints, but also allows them to attempt to understand them, thus developing the skill of understanding difference.

Bennett once explained that responding to intercultural differences requires one to be aware of not only of other cultures but also their own, along with the predispositions and prejudices that may occupy it (Bennett 2009). These predispositions and prejudices of a culture are referred to as subjunctive culture, which can best be described as one's view of the world and other cultures through their own culture (Berger and Luckmann 1967). This self-awareness of subjunctive culture has long been noted as an outcome of studying abroad during college. By studying abroad, college students foster self-awareness through self-analysis and immersion in a culture that is different. By being placed in an environment where a student's difference in identity becomes salient, college students become aware of their subjunctive culture and any predispositions it includes. However, participation in a study abroad program does not equate to being able to learn from difference.

The Chronicle of Education found that multiple universities have started programs to help students "unpack" their learning experiences in order to help students better

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realize and articulate what they learned abroad (Kowarski 2010). With these post-abroad programs, students are given the chance for retrospection, which enables them to reflect on their experience. With this element of reflection, study abroad programs become more than a simple semester long tour of a foreign culture. By reflecting on their experience, students are able to understand what they learned from a different culture. Thus I suggest the learning experience that contributes to the learning from difference skill is the experience of reflection, which has been linked to personal, professional, cognitive, and emotional growth (Branch & Paranjape, 2002). By including reflective learning in learning experiences that promote engaging with difference, educators are able create “deep learning,” whereas other approaches that lack reflection only result in “surface learning” (King, 2002).

Self-Authorship

In King and Magolda’s three-dimensional development trajectory of intercultural maturity a theme emerged in regards to one’s level of self-awareness with working and communicating across difference. This theme is the idea of being fully understanding of one’s own identity and taking ownership over it. Taking ownership over one’s identity involves an individual making conscious decisions, while being aware of who they are. This knowledge of one’s self is the path that leads self-authorship.

As stated earlier in the definition section, self-authorship consists of three elements: trusting the internal voice, building an internal foundation, and securing internal commitments (Magolda 2008). Magolda built this framework of self authorship off of Kegan’s previous work which focused on the “evolution of consciousness the personal unfolding of ways of organizing experience that are not simply replaced as we

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grow but subsumed into more complex systems of mind (Kegan 1994, p. 9). Trusting the internal voice can be defined as an individual having confidence that their opinions and feelings are valid, which is developed by gaining control over one's thoughts and responses (Magolda 2008). It closely aligns with the relativistic mindset of an individual who understands that "authorities don't have the answers" and realizes that they must "seek out answers on their own" (Perry 1981). This relative mindset develops when individuals begin trusting their internal voice. The second element of building an internal foundation is necessary for developing intercultural sensitivity as it enables individuals to create a sense of self. This sense of self comes from developing one's personal philosophy for life (Magolda, 2008). By developing a system for interacting with the world around them, students begin to explore the identities of others in a way that makes an effort to challenge their selves while being welcoming to difference (Chavez, Guido-Dibrito, & Mallory 2013). With the final element of self-authorship, securing internal commitments, students begin to live authentically. This is because they can use both their internal voice and internal foundation to interact with the world, while feeling secure with who they are internally (Magolda 2008). It is in this commitment to authenticity that enables self-awareness and develops a healthy self-esteem.

Self-authorship or being aware of who one is and understanding how that person interacts with the world around them is the source of this self-esteem. This self-esteem allows for students to realize how marginal their own culture is comparatively to the rest of the world, understand that it is acceptable to be simultaneously committed to their own culture while validating as well as appreciating other cultures, and feel unthreatened

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while exploring that difference (Bennett and Castiglioni 2004). In this way, developing self-authorship results in an increased ability to communicate and work across difference.

Student affairs professionals must invest in learning experiences that foster self-authorship to develop the ability to work and communicate across difference in students. However one's journey to self-authorship is a holistic experience with no single learning experience contributing a student's development. As observed by Magolda, self-authorship only begins to noticeably develop toward the end of a college student's undergraduate experience, becoming more evident in a person's late twenties (Magolda 2001). This means that for student affairs professionals, it is not so much the particular learning experiences that they provide for their students so much as the processing the students do after each experience. In this sense the learning experiences that college students have during their undergraduate experience synthesize together in a unique way with emergent properties. This means that when developing self-authorship, the metric student affairs professionals should use to evaluate their programming off of is not quantity or even specific type of event, but rather quality of reflection.

In addition to facilitating the development of intercultural sensitivity, reflection also triggers the development of self-authorship. One of the three elements of self-authorship Magolda's theory is "building an internal foundation". This element revolves around understanding the "core of one's being" (Magolda 2008). It is a crucial element in being able to answer the questions of self-authorship such as: "How do I know?" and "Who am I?" (Magolda 2001). To be able to answer these questions, one must turn to introspection and ask reflective questions. Thus, if one is reflecting to learn from difference, they are also reflecting in a way that causes them to identify who they are as

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individuals. In this way reflection is a learning experience that triggers growth for both intercultural sensitivity and self-authorship.

This second phase is referred to as the “Crossroads” in which an individual discovers the ideas that others have provided are not always adequate and they realize that they must start building their own personal philosophy (Magolda 2001). A classroom debate may trigger growth through this phase, by one student challenging what another student had thought based on what those in authority had provided. This leaves the second student understanding that the ideas they viewed as right are not necessarily correct and that there are other options for them to peruse. In this way classroom debate promotes the growth of self-authorship as well as providing a learning experience that promotes the understanding of difference. When one wishes to measure self-authorship, a common method to use is the Self-Authorship Survey (SAS) developed by Pizzolato (2007), which allows one to measure self-authorship in both a quantitative and qualitative way, utilizing a two part survey.

Intercultural Competence and Self-Authorship

King and Magolda (2005) suggest that in order to develop intercultural skills in students, the goal of educators should not only revolve around bolstering intercultural awareness, but rather developing maturity in students. The goal of intercultural competence should not be one of solely understanding how to effectively and appropriately engage with difference, but rather “see the world, themselves, and their own agency in more sophisticated and enabling ways, and who can appropriately draw upon that understanding as the need arises” (Magolda and King 2005, p. 586). It is in this sense that developing intercultural sensitivity becomes more than simply meeting certain

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levels of proficiency in communicating. When it is realized that developing intercultural competency is also about developing other areas of oneself, we are able to look at intercultural competence for what it truly is, a maturity that comes from self-authorship (Magolda and King 2005).

It is this element of personal maturity that creates genuine intercultural competence where students are not simply communicating in a certain way, because they were instructed to do so, but rather because they believe it to be true. As students develop this maturity through self-authorship, their *genuine* want to be interculturally competent increases. University classrooms and co-curricular activities are an opportune place to develop this maturity, and thus not only help develop student self-authorship, but also develop other critical skills such as intercultural competence. The learning experiences and moments that happen at universities are responsible for the growth of students as individuals, so it would stand to reason that we should encourage students to invest heavily in as many curricular and co-curricular experiences as possible. However, the connection between classroom or out-of-classroom learning experiences and personal growth is not so simple.

Satu Riutta and Daniel Teodorescu's 2014 quantitative study of leadership development in curricular and co-curricular experiences occurring within a diverse human aggregate examined what types of developmental experiences are most effective at promoting growth. More than 80% of first-year students at a Southeastern liberal arts institution participated in a Likert scale survey that explored their level of Socially Responsible Leadership and leadership development activities. The institution was selected because it was ethnically, religiously, and socioeconomically diverse with a

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variety of curricular and co-curricular opportunities in which students to engage (Riutta and Teodorescu 2014).

Riutta and Teodorescu's study found that the quality of leadership learning experiences in diverse environments that students engage in is more important than the amount of learning experiences (Riutta & Teodorescu 2014). Through their study, they reinforced earlier findings of the Multi-Institutional Leadership Study that suggest that the most important prerequisite for ability to lead in diverse environments during college is the ability for college students to focus on a select number of meaningful co-curricular experiences (Rosch 2007).

An important factor that also influenced growth in students was the presence of relationships among diverse peers. Compounding upon this is the quality of these diverse relationships, which has been found to be even more crucial in student development than the frequency of those interactions (Riutta & Teodorescu 2014). The study found that the most crucial factor in a student's development is the quality of interaction among peers, meaning that quality interaction among diverse peers fosters a better understanding of oneself and intercultural competence. At first this seems counter-intuitive, because one would think more experiences would equate to more growth. However, the frequency and diversity of student learning experiences is less important to the quality of the experience when developing overall maturity in students (Rosch, 2007).

The relationship between intercultural competence and self-authorship appears to suggest a direct positive correlation. As one of these traits increases so does the other in a manner that positively feeds back on its self. When people engage with others who are different, they learn more about who they are as an individual. This knowledge then helps

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individuals interact with others who are different by allowing them to understand who they are in relation to those people. This interaction translates to more intercultural experience, which further develops one's understanding of oneself allowing for more positive intercultural interactions in the future. This relationship means that if one is not developing self-authorship, they will never fully develop intercultural competence and if one is not developing intercultural competence, they will never fully develop self-authorship.

Chapter 3

Findings

The purpose of this paper was to review the literature on intercultural competence to understand what is known about what learning outcomes facilitate its development in traditional college students. Through this study, we hoped to identify the learning experiences and outcomes that contribute to the development of intercultural competency in traditional college students, and note how the development of self-authorship affects intercultural competency. For the purpose of this study we view intercultural sensitivity and self-authorship as the most basic constructs associated with this topic, but did not attempt to resolve the debates about whether intercultural competence/maturity or intercultural communication were higher order constructs.

The following quote from business leaders about interculturally competent people captures the overall finding of this study,

“Business leaders have found that interculturally competent people....are better prepared to understand, learn from and collaborate with others from a variety of racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds; demonstrate creative problem solving by integrating differing perspectives; exhibit the skills required for good teamwork; and demonstrate more effective responsiveness to the needs of all types of consumers” (Fortune 500 Cooperations, 2000).

To address these objectives the following research questions were explored, and the following findings emerged from the literature.

Research Question 1: What collegiate learning outcomes theoretically facilitate the development of intercultural competency? Self-authorship?

Intercultural competency.

The learning outcomes that develop intercultural competency are: (1) being able to understand another person's culture, (2) learn about that culture, and (3) effectively communicate in spite of those differences effectively and appropriately. By fulfilling these learning outcomes students become interculturally competent, which enables them to "engage in meaningful independent relationships with diverse others grounded in an understanding for human differences; understanding of ways individual and community practices affect social systems; willing to work for the rights of others" (Magolda and King 2005, p. 576).

Self-authorship.

The learning outcomes that develop self-authorship are: (1) the ability to understand oneself, (2) learn about oneself, and (3) communicate despite having that limited perspective of the world. By fulfilling these learning outcomes enable the "capacity to create an internal self that openly engages in challenges to one's view and beliefs and that considers social identities... in a global and national context; integrates aspects of self into one's identity" (Magolda and King 2005). If one accomplishes self-authorship it allows for students to experience Bennett's integration of difference stage where one "identities at the margins of two or more cultures and central to none ... in which movements in and out of cultures are a necessary and positive part of one's identity" (Bennett 2004 p. 72). Students that accomplish this state of being only do so because they are able to understand who they are and how their salient and non-salient

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identities impact others around them, learn how their identities affect others, and work past prejudices and predispositions that were once a part of their subjective culture.

Intercultural competence and self-authorship.

By combining the other focused learning outcomes of intercultural competence and the inwardly focused learning outcomes of self-authorship, our learning outcomes become about difference between two parties. When both elements of intercultural competence and self-authorship are present, the learning outcomes synthesize together to become...

- (1) understanding difference,
- (2) learning from difference, and
- (3) working/communicating across difference.

This element of difference is an interaction effect arising from looking at the learning outcomes that theoretically facilitate the development of intercultural competence and self-authorship alongside one another, which makes sense because in order for one to perceive difference, there must be two things, a person or party with one background that shapes who they are and how they interact with the world and another person or party with a second background shaping who they are and how they interact with the world.

Research Question 2: Which developmental milestones of self-authorship foster intercultural competency?

Developmental milestones of self-authorship that foster intercultural competency are observed in the cognitive and intrapersonal dimensions of Magolda and King's Developmental Model for Intercultural Maturity (2005). In the intrapersonal dimension they note that milestones on the way to self-authored intercultural competency is an

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“evolving sense of identity as distinct from external others’ perceptions; tension between internal and external definitions prompts self-exploration of values, racial identity, beliefs; immersion in own culture; recognizes legitimacy of cultures” (Magolda and King 2005, p. 578). As for the cognitive dimension Magolda and King define the developmental milestone as an “evolving awareness and acceptance of uncertainty and multiple perspectives; ability to shift from accepting authority’s knowledge claims to personal processes for accepting knowledge claims” (2005, p. 578). From these milestones we can note that the journey to self-authored intercultural competency is not so much about moving from stage to stage within a framework, so much as it is about a student maturing holistically as noted in Chapter Two’s Intercultural Competence and Self-Authorship section.

Research Question 3: What learning experiences shown in the literature to facilitate self-authored intercultural competency?

In order to meet the learning outcomes mentioned above in the Research Question 1 section of understanding difference, learning from difference, and working/communicating across difference, certain learning experiences prove to be more effective than others. Learning experiences that involve opportunities for students to be exposed to some form of difference from peers such as study abroad programs, reflective learning, and classroom debate are effective in developing self-authored intercultural competency. When a student is able to perceive difference and gain a better understanding of oneself, they are able to develop more toward self-authored intercultural competence. However as Ruitta and Teodorescu (2014) noted, students should not be overly saturated with these

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learning experiences in order to achieve self-authored intercultural competence. Instead, of quantity, the quality of learning experiences should be stressed, which allows students to deeply engage with a learning experience that aids in growing their overall maturity.

Three Areas of Intercultural Competency

In conclusion, through the research in this paper, I purpose that there are three overarching skills that interculturally competent individuals have in common. The connection between a person's level self-authorship and maturity and their level of intercultural competency, consisting of the following three skills, is still present as noted by Magolda and King (2005).

These three skills are:

- (1) Understanding difference,
- (2) Learning from difference, and
- (3) Working/Communicating across difference.

In other words, the above abilities represent three common learning outcome threads found across the research into how to cultivate interculturally competent self-authored people. Administrators or academicians creating learning experiences with the goal of increasing self-authored intercultural competency in college students should strive to cultivate each.

It is important to note that these three areas are not being purposed as a set of stages or positions that one moves through whilst developing intercultural competence. Rather, these are the three independent skills that enable one to be interculturally competent and are the hallmarks of self-authored interculturally

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competent individuals. Because these are three independent skills, a person can possess some degree of competency in one area while lack skill in another.

From the findings in this study, I suggest that the learning experiences that foster the development of these three areas are learning experiences that foster the growth of intercultural competency. I also suggest that self-authorship is an integral part of developing these three areas and a student's level of self-authorship impacts how well a student learns from these learning experiences.

Summary

In conclusion the combined learning outcomes of intercultural competence and self-authorship synthesize to be the three goals of (1) understanding difference, (2) learning from difference, and (3) working/communicating across difference. These developing these three skills, which include components of oneself and others who are different, develop as a student matures throughout their life, but their collegiate experiences are capable of optimizing this growth. However, as mentioned Chapter 1, literature on what exact learning experiences foster development of the three skills is just now emerging. Because of this, I purpose that in the near future a study be done to investigate the relationship between a student's learning experiences and level of self-authored intercultural competency. By using Chen and Starosta's (1998) Intercultural Sensitivity Scale to conceptualize where a student is developmentally in regards to intercultural competence and the Self-Authorship Survey (Pizzolato 2007) to understand both the student's qualitative personal experiences and quantitative place in their epistemological development.

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